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THE HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR.

A radio talk by Rowena Schmidt Carpenter, assistant to the chief, Bureau of Home Economics, delivered through WRC and 37 other radio stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, September 10, 1930.

How do you do, Homemakers:

Two weeks ago I talked to you a little about pickles, and urged you to send for a government bulletin and some recipes on picklemaking. And now for a few other suggestions.

First, something more about brining, since we recommend the brining method to all of you who do much picklemaking. Stone Jars make the best containers for fairly small quantities of pickles. Large glass jars with straight sides may be used too. Watertight wooden kegs or barrels are good if you make pickles on a larger scale. Cucumbers, green tomatoes, beets, corn on the cob, mango melons, and burr gherkins keep well for several months in containers of these kinds, in a brine of medium strength. This is made by using one pound of salt to each nine pints of water, and is called a 10% brine. Some vegetables require a stronger brine; a few, a weaker brine. As the sugar and juice are drawn out, the tissue of the vegetable becomes permeated with salt gradually, or as we say, fermentation goes on slowly. This is true only if the brine is kept at the same concentration throughout the weeks of the fermentation process. It is necessary to add more salt from time to time as the vegetable water or juice dilutes the brine. There is a small inexpensive piece of equipment called a salinometer that is almost essential in picklemaking by the long brining method. It is, as its name indicates, a salt meter, used to test the concentration of the brine. The 10% brine which we recommend for many vegetables shows a reading of 40 degrees on the salinometer. You can keep the brine constant in strength so easily and so surely by watching the reading on the salinometer while you add salt a little at a time each day.

And just a word about the salt to be used: Plain sack or bulk salt is best. Table or shaker salt is not so good for making brine because it often contains a little starch.

When vegetables are removed from brine, they have to be freshened somewhat before spices and vinegar are added to flavor them. Just enough salt is removed to make the vegetable palatable, by soaking either in plain water or in a fifty-fifty mixture of vinegar and water. Taste is the only means of deciding when enough salt has been removed. When the vegetable is sufficiently freshened, the seasoning step is in order, and this is where personal taste figures so largely. The blend of spices, the proportion of sugar, and the amount of vinegar to give just the right acidity or "twang" depends so much on what your family likes that it is better to use recipes only as a guide, modifying the flavor as you wish. Remember that any spices sealed up in the jars of finished pickles will continue to season them as they are stored. For this reason we let our pickles stand to season and to spice rather thoroughly

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before sealing them up, and put only a very few whole pickling spices in each jar as it is finally prepared for storing.

A special question has come from a homemaker who is having trouble with some cucumbers she put down in brine several weeks ago. The cucumbers seem to be getting soft, or at least to be hollow, and she wonders if they are spoiling. Judging from what she has told us in the letter, our expert on picklemaking here in the Bureau, Mrs. Yeatman, thinks that this homemaker used cucumbers that were too large and too ripe to brine whole. It is possible, too, that she did not put them down in the brine soon enough after they were picked. The only thing she can do now is to watch the brining cucumbers carefully each day, removing any that are floating or that seem hollow when pressed. She can use these hollow cucumbers in chopped, mixed relishes if she detects them and takes them out in time. The rest of us can profit by her unfortunate experience, making sure that we use firm, solid, freshly picked cucumbers, just underripe, not too large and all of uniform size.

Someone wrote us a few days ago about recipes for green tomatoes, which are so good in pickles and in cooked dishes. We were glad to send the recipes, though it is too bad to pick green tomatoes now. They are really not in season until after the ripening days are over, just before the weather man announces Jack Frost.

And now before I say goodbye, let me suggest again that as the season advances you put a variety of vegetables down in brine and then make up your mixed and chopped relishes later in the fall. Farmers' Bulletin 1438, "Making Fermented Pickles," and our recipes for relishes are yours for the asking, and will tell you about dill pickles, sauerkraut, and many other things I did not have time to mention.

Next week on Thursday Miss Ruth Van Deman will interview Miss Lucy Alexander on savory ways to prepare beef, so be sure to tune in on the 18th.

Goodbye, Homemakers!